

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 00961 131655 Z

43

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

AID-20 T-03 OMB-01 RSR-01 IO-12 /119 W  
----- 041528

R 131605 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3930  
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 0961

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PBOR PFOR EGEN HOES

SUBJECT: HONDURAN AND SALVADORAN FON MINS GIVE CONFLICTING  
EVALUATIONS TO PRESS

SUMMARY: IN MARCH 9 PRESS INTERVIEW, SALVADORAN FONMIN  
ASSERTED THAT SALVADORAN AND HONDURAN HISTORICAL DOCU-  
MENTARY CLAIMS TO DISPUTED AND OTHER OF EACH OTHERS  
TERRITORY OF ROUGHLY EQUAL VALIDITY, BUT IRRELEVANT,  
SUGGESTING THAT PEOPLE ALONG FRONTIER KNEW WHERE  
BORDER WAS AND THAT TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD NEGOTIATE A  
METHOD OF SETTLEMENT BASED ON CONSULTING LOCAL POPULACE  
ALONG BORDER. BORGONOVO QUOTED AS SAYING SALVADOR  
WOULD LIKE TO ACCEDE TO HONDURAN DEMANDS FOR JUDICIAL  
SETTLEMENT BUT WAS PREVENTED BY LEGAL OR CONSTITUTIONAL  
DIFFICULTIES. HOWEVER, BORGONOVO SAID PROGRESS BEING  
MADE AND PERSONAL CONTACTS WOULD CONTINUE, LEADING  
TOWARD GOOD RELATIONS. BATRES COUNTERED WITH PESSIMISTIC  
INTERVIEW NEXT DAY, STATING THAT " CURIOUS" PROCEDURE  
OF POPULAR CONSULTATION, OF COURSE, TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE,  
THAT GOH COULD NOT ACCEPT VALIDITY OF GOES CONTENTION  
OF LEGAL DIFFICULTIES IN ACCEPTING ARBITRATION SINCE GOH  
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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 00961 131655 Z

POSITION BASED PRECISELY ON ACCEPTED TENETS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ON TERMS OF PACT OF BOGOTA. HONDURAS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE RESTRUCTURING OF CACM TO MEET POPULAR NEEDS, BUT NOT TO ENTER FIVE COUNTRY CACM UNTIL AFTER GLOBAL SETTLEMENT WITH SALVADOR. BATRES ADDED THAT PROMPT SOLUTION UNLIKELY BUT GOH ALWAYS OPEN TO DIALOGUE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PRESS INTERVIEW APPEARING MARCH 9 IN SAN PEDRO DAILY PRENSA, SALVADORAN FONMIN BORGONOVO QUOTED AS SAYING SALVADORAN POSITION, REPEATED MANY TIMES IN PAST, IS THAT SALVADOR HAS POSSESSED FOR LONG TIME LANDS FOR WHICH HONDURANS CLAIM TO HAVE TITLE DOCUMENTATION. SALVADOR ALSO HAS DOCUMENTATION, HE ADDED, BUT DOCUMENTATIONS DEPEND ON WHICH PERIOD IS INVOLVED. BECAUSE OF CONFLICTS IN DOCUMENTATION, WHAT WE REALLY SHOULD DO IS FIND OUT WHAT TRADITIONAL POSITION IS. INTERVIEW REPORTS BORGONOVO FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT VISITOR TO FRONTIER ASKING INHABITANTS ON EITHER SIDE WOULD GET ROUGHLY SAME ANSWER AS TO WHERE FRONTIER RAN, AND IDEA OF SALVADOR WAS TO NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY AND JOINTLY DETERMINE AREAS IN DISPUTE IN ACCORD WITH GENERAL OPINION OF LOCAL INHABITANTS. BORGONOVO QUOTED AS SAYING THAT SALVADOR'S DIFFICULTIES IN ACCEDING TO HONDURAS' POSITION ARE OF LEGAL CHARACTER AND THAT HE AND BATRES WERE WORKING TO FIND A LEGALLY VIABLE FORM TO BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE. HE AND BATRES HAD CONVERSED IN EYQPTH AND EACH AGREED TO CONSULT HIS AUTHORITIES IN REGARD TO WHAT HAD BEEN FOUND. IN THIS SENSE, " WE" ARE MAKING PROGRESS, AS PROVEN BY EVER MORE FREQUENT GESTURES OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, WHICH CREATE PROPITIOUS CLIMATE FOR DEFINITIVE AGREEMENT.

WHEN ASKED IF SALVADOR WAS READY TO TAKE MATTER TO WORLD COURT, AS HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA HAD DONE, LPORGONOVO QUOTED AS SAYING SALVADOR HAD CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS IN THAT SENSE, BUT HE ASSURED INTERVIEWER THAT PERSONAL CONTACTS AT ALL LEVELS PROMOTED BY VARIOUS CA COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE AND THAT HE CONSIDERED THAT THIS WAS WHAT WOULD MOST HELP REESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONS.

2. AFTER COMMENTING ON VALUE AND NECESSITY OF CACM  
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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 00961 131655 Z

REVIVAL AND RESTRUCTURING, BORGONOVO WAS PARAPHRASED AS

ACKNOWLEDGING HONDURAN POSITION OF NOT RETURNING TO CACM UNTIL GLOBAL AGREEMENT REACHED WITH SALVADOR, INCLUDING DEFINITION OF FRONTIER, AND SAYING THAT SALVADOR WOULD LIKE TO ACCEDE TO THAT " PETITION" BUT THAT THAT WAS PRECISELY WHERE SALVADOR HAD DIFFICULTIES, WHICH HE DECLINED TO DISCUSS FURTHER.

3. BATRES IMMEDIATELY RESPONDED IN PRENSA INTERVIEW NEXT DAY SAYING THAT BORGONOVO INTERVIEW PARTICULARLY REVEALING AS IT MANIFESTED DIFFICULTIES PREVENTING PROMPT AND JUST SOLUTION OF PROBLEM. " MORE THAN ONCE I' VE SAID RGHT SOLUTION WON' T BE REACHED WITHOUT GOOD WILL ON BOTH SIDES, AND IN THIS SENSE", HE ADDED WITH PESSIMISM ( SAID INTERVIEW), " IT' S DISHEARTENING TO FIND THAT GOES APPEARS TO CONTINUE SUSTAINING POSITIONS WHICH INSTEAD HINDER A PROMPT SETTLEMENT." SPECIFYING WHICH POSITIONS THESE WERE AND REFERRING TO FRONTIER AS " MARROW" OF PROBLEM, BATRES SAID " HONDURAN POSITION HAS BEEN AND IS TO SUBMIT HERSELF TO NORMS AND PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED AND UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, BUT SALVADORAN FONMIN SEEMS TO PROPOSE CURIOUS PROCEDURE OF POPULAR CONSULTATION WHICH, OBVIOUSLY, IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE FOR US. SECONDLY, SALVADOR ALSO SEEMS TO ADDUCE LEGAL DIFFICULTIES GOH CAN' T CONSIDER VALID SINCE PROCEDURES GOH SUGGESTS ARE ONLY THOSE ESTABLISHED IN BOGOTA PACT. FINALLY, I WISH TO CLARIFY THAT OUR COUNTRY HAS NEVER PETITIONED SALVADOR, AS INTERVIEW IMPLIES, AND I MADE IT CLEAR... TO FONMIN BORGONOVO THAT HONDURAS' WELL KNOWN POSITION IS FIRM AND INVARIABLE."

4. ASKED ABOUT BORGONOVO' S CACM COMMENTS, BATRES REPEATED THAT, AS CHIEF OF STATE HAD SAID IN NEW YEAR' S MESSAGE, HONDURAS READY TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN NEGOTIATIONS TO RESTRUCTURE A CACM OF REAL BENEFIT TO CA PEOPLES, BUT WOULD NOT RETURN TO FIVE COUNTRY INTEGRATION AS LONG AS GLOBAL SETTLEMENT OF ALL PROBLEMS WITH SALVADOR NOT ACHIEVED. FROM FOREGOING, ADDED BATRES, HONDURAN PEOPLE CAN GATHER THAT QUICK AND RAPID SOLUTIONS CAN' T BE EXPECTED. HOWEVER, GOH ALWAYS OPEN TO DIALOGUE WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 TEGUCI 00961 131655 Z

MIGHT PRODUCE POSITIVE RESULTS IN ACCORD WITH HONDURAN NATIONAL DIGNITY AND INTERESTS.

5. COMMENT: LOCALE OF BORGONOVO TALK WAS NOT GIVEN. DAVIS

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